

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA  
San Diego, California***

*United States Attorney  
Gregory A. Vega*

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***For Further Information, Contact: Assistant U.S. Attorney Amalia L. Meza (619) 557-6092***

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***For Immediate Release***

**NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY** - November 10, 2000

Gregory A. Vega, United States Attorney for the Southern District of California, and Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Bill Lann Lee announced today that a federal grand jury in San Diego returned a 4-count indictment charging defendants Alexander James Curtis and Michael Brian DaSilva with Conspiracy to Violate Civil Rights, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 241, and Michael Brian DaSilva with Obstruction of Justice, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1513 (b)(3). They also announced that two associates of Curtis, Robert Nichol Morehouse and Kevin Christopher Holland, have pled guilty to conspiracy to violate civil rights and are awaiting sentencing. According to the indictment, Curtis, DaSilva, Morehouse and Holland were self-avowed "white supremacists" who advocated the supremacy of white people over other races, separation of the races and the oppression of Black, Jewish, Hispanic, and other ethnic and racial groups.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Amalia Meza, who is handling the government's prosecution along with Department of Justice Trial Attorneys Gerard Hogan and Roy Conn, III, the indictment alleges

that Curtis and DaSilva, as part of a conspiracy to commit hate crimes did willfully conspire to injure, oppress, threaten and intimidate Congressman Bob Filner, La Mesa Mayor Art Madrid, Anti-Defamation League Director Morris Casuto and former Director of Heartland Human Relations and Fair Housing Association Clara Harris. Among other things, the indictment alleges that the defendants left threatening messages at or near their place of business or home, such as Nazi swastikas, racist slogans advocating violence against racial minorities, snake skins, and an inactive hand grenade.

The indictment also alleges that the defendants conspired to damage religious property, specifically Congregation Tifereth Israel, located at 6660 Cowles Mountain Road in San Carlos, California, and Temple Adat Shalom, located at 15905 Pomerado, San Diego, by spray painting swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans on the property.

It is further alleged that Alexander James Curtis instructed his followers not to cooperate with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Attorney's Office and the federal grand jury, during this investigation. The indictment charges DaSilva with attempting to obstruct justice by threatening a former associate so he would not cooperate with law enforcement in this investigation.

United States Attorney Vega reiterated his office's commitment to prosecute to the full extent of the law perpetrators of hate crimes in our community. "The rights of all of our citizens, regardless of race, color, religion or national origin, will be protected," he added.

"Acts of intimidation based on race and hate will not be tolerated," said Bill Lann Lee, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. "The federal government remains steadfast in our efforts to prosecute each and every incident to the fullest extent of the law."

Robert Nichol Morehouse is scheduled to be sentenced on April 9, 2001, at 2:00 p.m. in front of Chief United States District Judge Marilyn Huff. Kevin Christopher Holland is scheduled to be sentenced on January 5, 2001, at 8:45 a.m. before District Judge Judith N. Keep.

The investigation was conducted by a joint task force of members of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and San Diego Police Department. United States Attorney Vega also thanked the District

Attorney's Office, the La Mesa Police Department and San Diego County Sheriff's Office for their assistance in the investigation of this matter.

### **DEFENDANTS**

Alexander James Curtis      Lemon Grove, California      DOB: 10/24/75

Michael Brian DaSilva      Lakeside, California      DOB: 8/23/79

### **SUMMARY OF CHARGES**

**counts: 4**

Title 18, United States Code, Section 241 - Conspiracy to Violate Civil Rights

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1512 (b)(3) - Obstruction of Justice

### **PENALTIES**

Title 18, United States Code, Section 241 - Conspiracy to Violate Civil Rights carries a maximum statutory punishment of ten years in custody, a maximum fine of \$250,000.

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1512 (b)(3) - Obstruction of Justice carries a maximum statutory punishment of ten years in custody, a maximum fine of \$250,000.

### **AGENCIES**

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT  
LA MESA POLICE DEPARTMENT

**The indictment itself is not evidence that the defendants committed the crimes charged. The defendants are presumed innocent until the government meets its burden in court of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.**